MANDER J. W. MILLER FROM HIS SON. Commander J. W. Miller has just received a letter rom his son, Henry Wise Miller, who is one of the engineers in the surveying party engaged on the route of the Nicaragua Canal. It is dated "In camp," Brito, Nicaragua, March 20, and the part of

route of the Nicaragua Canai. It is dated "In camp," Brito, Nicaragua, March 20, and the part of it which is of public interest is as follows:

The Nicaragua Canal may be roughly divided into a waterway of three radically different characteristics, namely: (I) Canai and excavation; (2) an artificial basin, including the San Francisco Valley and the Lake of Nicaragua; (3) the River San Juan.

A traveller through the completed canai will find only a small part of his journey through a "canal" as commonly understood, and in order to get an idea of the varying features of this project let us start from Greytown, on the Atlantic, and go over the route until we reach Brito, the western terminus, on the Pacific. We will then have traversed, in guecession, a stretch of lagoon; heavily timbered valleys, flooded and converted into a lake; sixty-four miles of the River San Juan, and through a narrow canal on the west of the lake; traversing a low, arid country we come to another small basin, from which, after descending the locks, we reach the Pacific.

A word first as to the surveys and commissions which have in turn considered the proposal to build a canai through Nicaragua, using the San Juan and the lake for 140 of the 170 miles of the total route. They began with that under Colonel Childs, during 180, 1851 and 1852, which was sent down to Nicaragua at the instance of the Vanderbilt Transit Company. With the discovery of gold in 1849 this company had established trans-isthmilan communication with California by steamer and stage route. In 1872 the United States sent an expedition under Commander Luil, U. S. N. His expedition had parties in the field for two years. In 1885 Mr. Menocal, who had been chief civil engineer under the Luil survey, made a re-examination of the route which that survey had decided upon.

The present Maritime Canal Company has had survey parties in the field from 1887 to 1805.

A CONSENSUS OF OPINIONS.

For just fifty years surveyors have been investigating the possibility of a canal through Nica-ragua, and the project decided upon by the first has, with inconsiderable modification, though with some additions, been that settled on by the company finally organized to build the canal. This company commenced work in 1887 and stopped in 1893, owing to the crisis of that year. During the time the harbor of Greytown was opened, and three quarters of a mile of canal and eleven of railroad were built. The last investigation to record was that of the Ludiow Commission of 1895. Colonel Ludiow and two civil engineers were sent by the Government to make a report upon the feasibility and cost of construction of the route of the Maritime Canal Company. An act to incorporate the company had passed the Senate in January, 1895. The report of the Ludiow Commission was based on a personal inspection of the line during a stay of five weeks. The Board's letter of transmittal contains this sentence: "The Board in aware, better perhaps than any one else can be, of the inadequacy of its discussion of the features of the canal project." Although it was granted that the canal was quite feasible, the report of the Ludiow Commission made such a high estimate of the probable cost that the canal was damaged in the eyes of a great many.

The present expedition, consisting of four Commissioners and two hundred men, who were distributed over the line, was sent to Nicaragua with instructions to submit a report that should be final. some additions, been that settled on by the company

Commencing at Greytown, let us review the line In all probability it will be raining hard-it is apt to rain in Greytown twelve months in the year-as re quit the heavy surf of the Atlantic to pass the lighthouse marking the entrance to Greytown Har-

ignitiouse marking the entrance to Greytown harbor. For ten miles the canal goes straight back across the country through swampy land to the foot hills of the East Divide.

There are three locks on the east side of the canal, and these, within a space of six miles, raise us to the summit level, 100 feet above mean tide. After Lock No. 3 is passed a steamer may go 144 miles before having to pass through another.

The last three miles of the canal on the Atlantic side form one of the heaviest and most expensive parts of the work, a continuous deep cut through rock. From between the walls of this cut the canal enters the San Francisco basin. The site of the basin now is a heavily timbered valley drained by three large streams. By damming their outlet to the San Juan, which runs parallel to the canal, it is proposed to form an artificial basin twelve miles long. The Ludlow Board complained of the deficiency of data relative to the gauging of the water courses in the San Francisco Basin. The hydrographic party of the present Commission has two camps and four gauging stations on the San Francisco and other important streams. The Ludlow Commission also thought that the danger of a foreign Power destroying the embankments in time of war should be noted; such comment was certainly hypercritical, for, as Admiral Walker recently said, a stick of dynamite under any of the locks would destroy the canal as effectually. THE DAM ON THE SAN JUAN.

We have now reached one of the main features of the canal company's project. This is the dam at. Ochoa, on the San Juan, three miles below its junc-tion with the San Carlos, which will submerge the tion with the San Carlos, which will submerge the valleys of both rivers and convert them into arms of the lake. So that, with the basin in the San Francisco Valley, all that will be necessary to make a water highway from within sight of the Caribbean to within seventeen miles of the Pacific will be the blasting of some shelves of rock in the San Juan and the marking of the channel by buoys and lights. The great difficulty that lay in the way was the finding of a suitable site of rock bottom for the dam. Up to the time of the borings of the present Commission this question was still in doubt. The boring party made its first camp at Ochoa, and in two weeks reported sufficient indications of rock to put the question beyond any doubt. About the same time Mr. Eble, who with his party had made camp fifteen miles below Ochoa, at Tambor Grande, with the intention of looking for a suitable site should the one at Ochoa prove impracticable, reported that a dam could be built at this point as well. It is unnecessary to enter into the relative advantages of the two spots; suffice it that the problem of the whole eastern section may be regarded as now satisfactorily solved.

We may, then, confidently assert that the Commissioners are aiready satisfied that the company's plans for the east division may be put into execution.

INCREASED COST DUE TO MUD.

A proviso should be made, however. Recent advantages of the two spots; suffice it that the Company of the whole eastern section may be regarded as now satisfactorily solved.

INCREASED COST DUE TO MUD.

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cisco Basin report mud to a depth of fifty feet below sea level at the site of the embankments, which vill considerably increase the cost there. Engineers in charge of the work at Ochoa will

Engineers in charge of the work at Ochoa will find all necessary data concerning the discharge, the volume and velocity of the river ready to hand, as the first camp of the hydrographic party was stationed there, to remain probably for a year to come. Before leaving the eastern section of the camal it may be well to say a word as to the auxiliary work the Commission is doing.

The United States steamship Newport, which brought the Commission to Greytown, has remained to make soundings of the harbor of Greytown, and a survey party has completed the topography.

Alternate routes having been suggested to the Caribbean other than that by way of Ochoa and the valley of the San Francisco, parties were put in the field to make investigation of the region about the delta of the San Juan, not so much in the hope of discovering another route, but, as the chief engineer puts it. "to bring it to a regular conclusion."

After leaving Ochoa, sixty-four miles of river navigation brings us to Lake Nicaragua, which is 110 miles long and 45 miles broad. We enter the lake at its southeastern end from the San Juan. Here we find Lieutgnant Hanus's party, consisting of four officers and twelve bluelackets, engaged in taking soundings; the depths are determined from two steam launches brought by the Newport. Lieutenant Hanus has found a deeper and straighter channel than was supposed. Crossing the lake we pass the island of Gmetepe, with its two volcanic pasks, rising over a mile high, and its excellent anchorage about five miles from the commencement of the western end of the canal.

AT THE WESTERN END.

The appearance of the country in this region has completely changed; instead of the thick forest and unthabited regions, with only an occasional thatched hut, on the bank of the San Juan, we find on the west side that the country is low and roll-

thatched hut, on the bank of the San Juan, we find on the west side that the country is low and rolling, the trees sparse, with clumps of adobe houses roofed with large tiles every few miles; dry and pleasant weather has taken the place of the incessant rains of the lower San Juan. At Brito, the western terminus of the canal, there has not been a shower during the months of February and March. The first fifteen miles of the canal west of the lake are through an almost level and open country and there is little doubt that many changes will be made from the former survey. Mr. Walker, who is the son of the president of the Board, is, however, making a new and elaborate survey from Lajos to Brito. He expects to reach the coast by the middle of May.

At La Flor, four miles away from Brito, there is to be another and smaller basin similar to that in the San Francisco Valley. Lock No. 4 brings the canal to the level of the ocean again. The coast here is made up of long stretches of sand beach asoparated by bold promontories. The harbor at separated by bold promontories, and beach asoparated by bold promontories. The harbor at separated by bold promontories, and beach water, parallel to the shore, from a headland that jots into the sea on the southern side. The spirit of the Ludlow Board was never more clearly shown than when it said the "surf" at Brito averaged from four to ten feet. The trades blow invariably off shore, so that a sea running stendily of five feet is rare. For the most part the sea is smooth. The Alert has been at Brito since February 14. A pariy of three officers and fourteen men was landed there to de the preliminary shore work. This will be finished by the second week in April. The soundings made from the steam launch will be completed about May 1.

TROUBLE WITH INSURGENTS.

It may be added that Captain Leutze, of the Alert, It may be added that Captain Leutze, of the Alert, was stopped when returning from Pivas by insurgents who were marching upon that town, but immediately released and sent on under an escort. During the engagement at San Juan del Sur, where the Alert was lying, two armed boats' crews were the Alert was lying, two armed boats' crews were handed to protect the cable office. A shell from a Krupp gun on the heights landed between them as they pulled in. The insurgents were defeated, and a war indemnity has since been demanded from Costa Rica by Nicaragua. The insurgent forces were fitted out in that country. War is therefore imminent between the countries.

There is little doubt that in the event of war Nicaragua will be hadly whoped unless the two other sembers of the so-colled Greater Republic of Cen-

DATA FOR CANAL WORK. tral America come to her aid. Her affairs are in a peculiarly chaotic condition.

There is one thing more which at this writing

tral America come to her aid. Her affairs are in a peculiarly chaotic condition.

There is one thing more which at this writing one may say. Mr. Wheeler, chief engineer, has directed that a new reconnoissance be made for an outlet for the overflow of the waters from the lake. An elaborate system of weirs and sluices had been designed at Ochoa and near the San Carlos to meet this difficulty. These were expensive and delicate in operation, as was inevitable in the regulation of tropical rainfall over an immense watershed. Should Mr. Wheeler's plan be found practicable, the height of the dam and embankments will be lowered and the excavation in rock in the San Juan materially diminished. The alteration may be depended upon to lower the estimate of the Ludlow Commission over \$20,000,000.

To many by far the most important thing in the history of the Nicaragua Canal was the arrival of certain Chicago contractors, who wished to form an opinion as to the cost of the canal. These gentlemen travelled over the canal line in something under three weeks. They found nothing to detain them for more than five days on the west side. Mr. Perez, a civil engineer of Nicaragua, who has made surveys of a large part of the line, accompanied them over the route. He said, on returning to Rivas, that when the party reached Greytown they gave him to understand they were ready and willing to take the contract at the company's figures, provided only our Government would insure them protection.

The work of this Commission and the trip of the Chicago contractors put the affairs of the Nicaragua Canal in better position than ever before. With rock at Ochoa and the regulation of the summit level assured the rest is mere digging.

HOUSE DECORATION AT THE FAIR.

THE CENTRAL ART ASSOCIATION TO FURNISH A HOUSE AT OMAHA.

Chicago, April 3 .- George R. Dean, repr the Industrial Art Department of the Central Art Association, started to-day for Omaha to arrange for a unique exhibition which is contemplated by that association at the Trans-Mississippi Exposi-

house of six or seven rooms, according to the most approved artistic principles, as an object-lesson in the practical application of art education to home life. So far as possible American furnishings will be used. The prospect is that the model house will not only be one of the greatest attractions, but one of the most practical educational features of the Exposition.

THE CHARGES SUBSTANTIATED. There was posted on the Produce Exchange yes agers that the charges in the complaint of A. J. Toomey, for Hadley & Toomey, in liquidation, against Calvin Russell and Clarence T. Birkett, comprising the firm of Russell & Birkett, at Penn Yan, N. Y., are, in the opinion of the Board, sub-stantiated. Russell & Birkett have consequently been prohibited from having representation on the Exchange.

HEAVY BUYING OF REFINED SUGARS. The increasing likelihood of war has within the last fortnight had the effect of inducing heavy buy-ing of refined sugars, as it is believed that prices would promptly advance upon an outbreak of hos-tilities. Granulated grades, however, have not been in much demand. The American Sugar Refining Company has on hand a large stock of granulated. In addition to the probability of war, the fact of the unusually small difference between the prices of refined and raw sugars, less than seven-eighths of a cent a pound, has operated to swell the purchases

The Arbuckles and the Sugar Trust still deny that a truce between them is in contemplation. The Arbuckle and Doscher sugar refineries, it is reported, will begin operations in September. Hawalian planters, it is announced, are soon to build in California a refinery which is to have a capacity of two thousand barrels a day, and will refine the surplus remaining after supplying the Mollenhauer contract. The opening of this refinery will bring the capacity of refineries in the United States, outside of the Sugar Trust, to twenty-one thousand barrels a day, as against the trust's capacity of thirty-nine thousand barrels a day with the refineries which it is at present operating. The increasing beet-sugar industry is also a competitor with which the trust must reckon. There are now in operation nine beet-sugar refineries, but nine others are building, and will soon be prepared to enter the field. a truce between them is in contemplation.

Lewiston, Me., April 8.-A schedule filed in the Alvin Record, a lumber and real estate dealer of Livermore Falls, who assigned recently, to be \$220,000. The heaviest creditor is the Jay Pulp Manufacturing Company, which has a claim of \$77,301. There are forty creditors in the list.

STEAMSHIP BUSINESS SUFFERS.

Boston, April 8.-Steamship agents in this city say that the war scare has interfered seriously with their passenger business. This is true to a certain extent of their freight business also. the trans-Atlantic steamer lines, as well as those running to Southern ports, are feeling the depression. This is the season of the year when there is usually the greatest number of bookings, but at present less business is being done than at any period of the year except midwinter.

A TROLLEY DECISION REVERSED.

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals has reversed Judge Lacombe's opinion in the suit of the Thomson-Houston Electric Company against the Union Railway Company and the Walker company for an alleged infringement of patent, in which an injunction was granted preventing the Union Railway Company from using and the Walker company from manufacturing underground trolley apparatus. The suit has been pending in the United States courts for the last five years.

COAL AND IRON MARKET CONDITIONS. "The Engineering and Mining Journal" will say

to-day:

The colder weather of the last week has stimulated the demand for anthracite coal, and, stocks being low, there has been considerable movement in this direction, mostly in the all-line trade. Restrictions on production are greater, and prices are unchanged.

The bituminous trade shows a large demand, particularly from the Far East, but a scarcity of vessels on account of the Government's action in taking tugs has hindered shipments.

The disturbed political conditions have been followed by some hesitation in the iron market. While the mills are all busy on existing contracts, there has been a perceptible check in new orders; outside of the Government orders for war material it may be said that nothing is coming in just now. This is especially to be seen in structural material, a number of new building projects being held up by the uncertain financial conditions. Prices continue generally unchanged, except that there is some demoralization in foundry iron, owing to competition for large orders.

There is talk of a combination of furnaces, but the interests to be reconded are so various that any arrangement of the kind is very doubtful.

POTTERS TO MEET IN THIS CITY. Cincinnati, April 8.-A "Commercial-Tribune" dispatch from East Liverpool, Ohio, says: "T. L. dispatch from East Liverpool, Ohio, says: "T. L. Johnson, of Trenton, N. J., called on the East Liverpool potters on Thursday, urging them to unite with Eastern concerns to form a combination to control prices. A meeting will be held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New-York, next Thursday, to arrange details."

INCORPORATED IN NEW-JERSEY. Trepton, April 8 (Special).-The following com-

The Brighton Flower Company, of East Orange; capital, 10,000. Corporators—Margaret E. Mc-Creery, Ella F. Schott and John McCreery, of East Orange.

The McKay Cremator Construction Company, of Jersey City; capital, \$200,000. Corporators—Kevin W. Barry, of Bayonne, N. J.; George A. Treacy and John Farley, of New-York.

The Saltine Chemical Company, of Hoboken; capital, \$50,900. Corporators—H. F. Thiemann; George Steele and Isaac Haines, of Hoboken.

The Union Land, Coke and Oil Company of Ten-The Union Land, Coke and Oil Company of Tennessee; capital, \$17,000,000; corporators, Cyrus G. Godfrey, of St. Louis; William T. Blessing, of Brooklyn; S. C. Mead, Howard H. Wood and John J. Ranagan, of New-York, and H. W. Meek and Edward J. Maturin, of Jersey City.

LARGE CHECKS AT THE POSTOFFICE. Postmaster Van Cott received two checks yesterday morning from the Postmaster-General, aggregating nearly \$1,000,000. One was for \$575,329 16, covering funds transferred from the postal balance to pay money-orders on other postoffices. The other was for \$34,523 75, representing the revenue from money-order offices in the last three months. Other checks amounting to \$46,750 brought the sum up to \$76,341. This was deposited to the credit of the General Postoffice in the Sub-Treasury. Postmaster Van Cott received two checks yes-

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banks that the Treasury Department would draw upon them with the smallest possible delay for at least part of the balance held by them of the \$52. paid to the Government by the purchasers of the Union Pacific Railway. These special de-pository banks are the National City, Hanover National, Chase National and Fourth National. total balance due the Government is now about \$12,000,000, of which the National City Bank, with little less than \$8,000,000. Some time ago an ar rangement was made by which the banks should pay from time to time 19 per cent of their respective holdings of the Union Pacific moneys, the payments being made gradually so that the money market should not be disturbed. These calls were suspended several weeks ago, but the Government is now so situated that it can readily use the balance, as heavy payments are to be made for vessels and war material recently purchased in Europe.

Europe.

The fourth payment of money due the Government on account of the purchase of the Kansas Pacific by the Union Pacific Reorganization Committee was made yesterday, when a check for \$1.325,750, drawn to the order of the Treasury Department, passed through the Clearing House, resulting in the Sub-Treasury being creditor at the Clearing-House to the extent of \$33,000.

THE LEATHER TRADE. Chicago, April &-"The Shoe and Leather Re-

"The neglect of buyers has caused the hide mar-ket to decline materially, but the quotations are still about 1½ cents higher than they were at this time last year. Native steer hides were sold this week at 10½ cents. They are accumulating, and the packers were unable to sustain the market. Light native cow hides were sold for less than 10 cents. In the country hide market there is a better tone. Buffs rule at 3 cents.

YORK MILL STRIKERS OWN DEFEAT. Saco, Me., April 8.-The York cotton-mill strikers Monday. They struck in January, when the general cutdown in wages in New-England cotton mills went into effect. About sixteen hundred hands were involved in the strike.

LOCAL BUSINESS COMPLICATIONS.

Deputy-Sheriff Sullivan received three executions yesterday against John C. Graul, manufacturer o mirrors and frames, at No. 137 West Twenty-third-st., aggregating \$3,058-from Victor J. Dowling, in favor of Mary E. Graul, \$1,932; Catherine Frech, executrix of the estate of John J. Frech, \$613, and Maria A. Hofsess, \$512, all for borrowed money. He has been in business since March 11, 1896, when he bought out C. P. Woodworth & Co. He generally carried a stock of \$8,000. His trouble is attributed to duil business. He lost considerable trade during the Christmas holiday season on account of the street in front of his store having been torn up.

against Ezra A. Hayt, of No. 158 Broadway, from Perry & Abbot, in favor of Charles Remsen and William Manice, as executors of the estate of William Remsen, for \$16,740 for balance due on four notes made by Mr. Hayt, two on December 27, 1889, \$22,257, and Mr. Hayt paid \$7,500 on it on May 15, 1838. Mr. Hayt has been president of several companies, and was formerly United States Indian Commissioner.

John A. Knox, builder of the house at No. 2.676 Marion-ave., Fordham, in favor of the Henry Huber Company, on two notes. Mr. Knoz has been in the building line for twenty-five years, and a few years ago claimed to have equities in real estate of \$100,000.

Transcripts of two judgments from Kings County were filed here yesterday against Julia M. Budiong in favor of Robert H. Hazeitine, \$10,853, and Joseph-ine H. Hazeitine, \$3,34.

TELEGRAPHIC NOTES.

Folsom, Cai., April 8.—C. H. Raymond was hanged to-day for the murder of Fred Andrews, at Baden, San Mateo County, on November 17 last. He died

Savannah, April 8.—Bristow Graham, colored, was hanged in the county jall here to-day. He killed B. R. Wilson on December 19, 1896. This is the first time an execution has taken place here on Good Friday.

Joplin, Mo., April 8.—A gang of counterfeiters in Southwest Missouri, Southeast Kansas and Indian Territory has been broken up by Deputy Marshal "Lem" Short, and two of of the gang, "Jake Young and William Lee, have been arrested and taken to Fort Scott, Kan., for examination. Rochester, N. Y., April 8.—Fire destroyed the old and the new Killip Blocks at Genesee this morning at 2 o'clack, besides gutting the Rogers Building. The estimated damage to the buildings and their contents is \$20,000. Two Chinamen barely escaped with their lives. Daniel Swartz and his wife escaped in their night clothing.

Middletown, N. Y., April 8.—John Burkhart, of Port Jervis, keeper of the Laurel Grove Cemetery, built a gallows in his house and then called in police officers to see how he intended to end his life in a fortnight. His wife caused his arrest, and he will be brought to the State hospital here.

Worcester, Mass., April 8.—William H. Oldenburgh, of North Grafton, was arrested in Providence on Thursday and brought to this city by Inspectors O'Day and Stone, where he is locked up on the charge of larceny. Thomas Monahan, of Grafton, is the complainant, and says that Oldenburgh induced his sons, fifteen and thirteen years old, to give him money. The sum takea was \$1.350. Monahan has a fear of banks, and kept his money in a tin box at his home.

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EUROPEANS AND TRAVELLERS WILL SAG the London office of The Tribune, 149 Fleet Street, a convenient place to leave their advertisements and subscriptions for The Tribune.

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reception rooms.

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SLEEPING CARRIAGES for first class passengers are attached to all night trains.

RUGS or PILLOWS are supplied on hire to first and third class passengers.

TOURIST TICKETS are issued from May 1st until October 31st, enabling travellers to break their journey at all points of interest on the direct route between London and Scotland.

PAMPHLETS and all information can be obtained from Mr. Frank C. Clark, 111 Broadway, New York.

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